

EU-STRATEGY FOR THE DANUBE REGION

**EUSDR PRIORITY AREA 10 „STEPPING UP INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING
AND COOPERATION“ D-LAP DANUBE LOCAL ACTORS PLATFORM**

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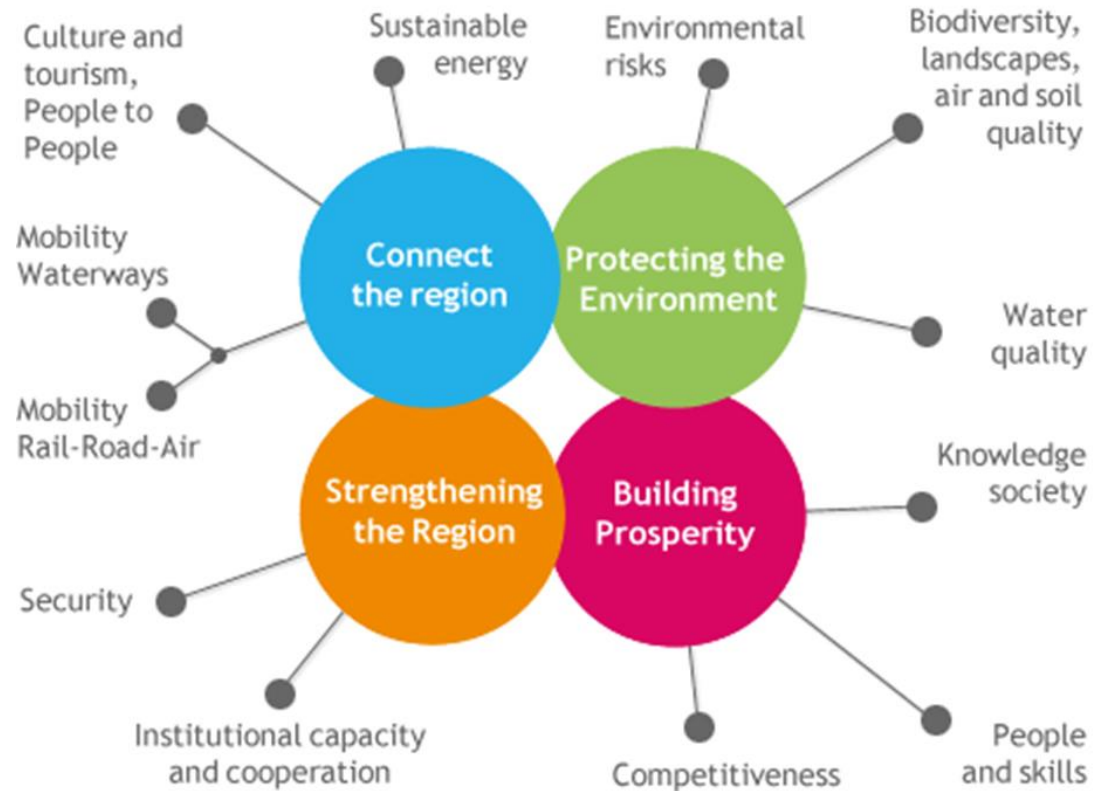
DANUBE CIVIL SOCIETY FORUM

STEFAN AUGUST LÜTGENAU

EUSDR: FROM BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG TO MOLDOVA



PILLARS AND PRIORITY AREAS OF THE DANUBE STRATEGY



How do Macro-Regions work?

- **The three NO's: no new funds, no new institutions, no new laws- reiterated in the Council Conclusions on MRS in April 2017**
- **Top down governance, mainly public administration+political level: EP, European Council, EU DG Regio, national coordinators, priority area coordinators, steering groups with member states representatives, working groups with diverse stakeholders**
- **Since 2016, EUSDR financing through the Danube Transnational Programme under the ETC-regulation- Strategy as a Project**
- **100.000 Euro for each Priority Area, co-financing 15%**
- **Challenges: Political support, financial support, structured involvement of relevant stakeholders in the governance...**

TARGETS OF PRIORITY AREA 10

- **Improving public governance and institutional capacity building**
- **Establishing national hearings with public authorities and civil society**
- **Enhancing exchange of information & cooperation between local actors at all levels**
- **Implementing pilot projects for alternative funding (f.e. small project fund-START, Tool-Box...)**

The Danube Civil Society Forum

- based on the concept of merging Participation (Art.11 TEU) with Regionality/Subsidiarity (Art. 4-5 TEU)
- founded 1 July 2014 by 104 NGOs in Eisenstadt, self-organised by NGOs
- umbrella organisation for the representation of civil society interests in the macro-region
- platform for dialogue and networking amongst civil society organisations
- clearinghouse for information flow top-down and bottom-up
- promoter for the concept of participation in EUSDR and MRS
- greenhouse for participation on local, regional, national and supra-national level
- 17 Danube and Participation Days in 9 countries since 2015, Agenda for Participation in MRS

PA10 approach to local actors involvement

- Principles of **subsidiarity**, **transparency** and **participation**
- Policies should take place *where people live*
- Measures should be tailor-made (place-based approach)
- Civil society involvement is crucial with regards to
 - Project & policy development
 - Transparency, participation, legitimacy
 - Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy
 - Expertise
 - Institutional memory & capacity/governance
 - Strengthening democratic structures in transformation countries
 - Establishing a „macro-regional public sphere“

THE DANUBE LOCAL ACTORS PLATFORM D-LAP

- **Open platform was established in 2014 by PA10 stakeholders**
- **Over a hundred Local Actors from all 14 EUSDR member countries**
- **Framework for exchange and cooperation between local actors/EUSDR and European institutions**
- **Provides an interface for structured consultations between NGO's, public authorities, social partners, academia, project promoters, European and regional institutions**

What does the Danube Local Actors Platform do?

The D-LAP implements the “Participation Agenda “ for Civil Society and Local Actors in the MRS together with the Danube Civil Society Forum through the following measures:

- Support “National Participation Days” implemented by the National EUSDR-Coordinators, relevant national ministries and the Danube Civil Society Forum-DCSF. The NPD connects organized civil society and Non-Governmental Organisations with the activities of the EUSDR, National Contact Points, national Ministries, bodies of the European Commission as well as funding-institutions and involve them in the governance of the macro-region
- Organize in parallel to each Annual Forum of the EUSDR, the “Danube Participation Day” showcasing projects and discussing the integration of local actors and place-based strategies in the implementation of the Danube Strategy. The Danube Participation Day is jointly implemented by PA 10 and the Danube Civil Society Forum in cooperation with the respective EUSDR presidencies. The model was taken on by EUSBR and EUSALP in 2016/17.
- Gathering and providing information about relevant activities and developments concerning civil society, local actors, governance, and participation on the EUSDR-PA 10 website and the DCSF website, easily accessible for other Priority Areas and EU, international and national institutions/organizations
- Organizing specific thematic stakeholder meetings (Participation Partnership Meetings) between the Annual Fora

EUSDR Danube and National Participation Days

4th Participation Day of the EU Danube Strategy

- Budapest 17.October 2017
- “Science meets participation, innovation and sustainability”
- The “Agenda for Participation”



National Hearings

- Strengthening cooperation between national, regional and local authorities and civil society organisations
- Exchange experience and knowledge on possibilities and challenges for cooperation
- Since 2014, 14 National Hearings in 8 EUSDR member countries



The „Agenda for Participation“ and the Participation Partnerships

- The „Agenda for Participation of Civil Society and Local Actors in EU Macro Regions“ sums up the activities developed and implemented by the DCSF and Priority Area 10 since 2014.
- It takes the roadmap for local actors and civil society one step further with the „Participation Partnerships- sustainable working groups aiming at promoting and implementing participation at all levels in the Danube Region




Local Actors and Civil Society: what should change 2020+

- **The potential of Local Actors and Civil Society in terms of expertise, project development and mobilisation of stakeholders should be used via an open consultation procedure on the future of macro-regional strategies in the 2020+ debate>**
- **A regular and structured coordination and exchange of information at all levels with all stakeholders should be installed- the format of the Structured Dialogue of DG Regio could be further developed at national and transnational level, as well as existing formats of participation for Local Actors and Civil Society in the strategies**
- **Programs and funds must be adapted to the needs of relevant stakeholders of the MRS. Easily accessible and manageable funding instruments, including pre-financing models and project preparation for smaller projects, would strengthen the involvement of local actors and civil society in the development of all MRS and further the better use of EU and national funding**
- **The participation of macro-regional key implementers, Local Actors and organized Civil Society in the elaboration of partnership agreements and shared management of funds should be encouraged, also through capacity building measures**
- **The participation of Local Actors and NGOs should be furthered by lightening the administrative burden involved with the implementation of transnational projects, especially in transition, accession and neighborhood countries involved in macro regional strategies.**
- **Tailor-made instruments for Local Actors and Civil Society Organizations, including small project funds and seed money facilities should be developed. The Danube Investment Facility Initiatives (START, TAF, DFD, DSPF) were financed by the European Parliament as pilot projects implemented by PA 10, and widely supported by project promoters across the region. The positive results and experiences of these pilots could be extended to other MRS and should be capitalized in the next funding period.**

Thank you for your attention!

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